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by William P. Carlin

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THE BATTLE OF BENTONVILLE.

BY WILLIAM P. CARLIN,

Colonel Fourth United States Infantry; Brevet Major-General United States Army.

It is not intended, in this sketch, to write a history of the battle of Bentonville, North Carolina, the last battle of Sherman's grand army, but to describe some of the incidents of the battle, and, especially, such operations as came under my personal observation.

The left wing of Sherman's army, technically the "Army of Georgia," consisted of the Fourteenth Corps, Army of the Cumberland, commanded by Major-General Jefferson C. Davis, and the Twentieth Corps of the Army of the Cumberland, commanded by Major-General A. S. Williams. The "Army of Georgia" was commanded by Major-General Henry W. Slocum. The right wing, the Army of the Tennessee, was commanded by Major-General O. O. Howard, and consisted of the Fifteenth and Seventeenth Corps.

When Sherman's grand army marched from Savannah, Georgia, for the North, through the two Carolinas and Virginia, the right and left wings diverged, the right wing crossing the Savannah River at that city, the left marching up the west side of the river, forty miles, to Sister's Ferry, where it crossed, and entered South Carolina.

The two wings continued to diverge, the right menacing Charleston, the left Augusta, till they had passed

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those points, when they rapidly converged on Columbia. Up to this point, the armies had met with but little opposition, save from the elements. Rains had fallen almost incessantly; the rivers were swollen, and the roads were impassable for artillery and wagons for miles on many days. The troops corduroyed the roads, in such places, with fence rails and small trees.

On leaving Columbia, the right and left wings again spread out like a fan, in order to cover as much territory as possible, and again converged on Fayetteville, North Carolina, and there destroyed the fine arsenal built by the United States before the war, but used by the Confederacy during the war. Sherman's movements having caused the evacuation of Charleston and its forts by the rebel troops, these had already passed ahead of Sherman into North Carolina, under command of Lieutenant-General W. J. Hardee. From Fayetteville, the right and left wings again diverged, the right keeping the direct road to Goldsborough, the left the road to Raleigh, till near Averysboro.

On approaching Averysboro, North Carolina, on the 16th of March, 1865, there was some sharp fighting between the cavalry and part of our infantry force at the head of the column of the left wing, with Hardee's command, which delayed the march of the left wing perhaps a day. We crossed Black River on a wooden bridge constructed by the troops of the First Division, Fourteenth Corps, under the immediate direction of Colonel George P. Buell, Fifty-eighth Indiana, commanding a brigade in that division on the road from Averysboro to Goldsboro.

On the 18th of March the road was very muddy at many points, and there were occasional showers of rain, relieved by a bright spring sunshine, when the showers had passed. There was a ridge of land on the left of, extending several miles along and only about fifty yards from the road. Occasionally a poor cabin or farm-house, surrounded that morning by women and children, was located on that ridge. At or near all these cabins mounted men were seen either watching the troops on the road, passing up toward the head of the column, or working through the woods to get a close view of Sherman's troops. These horsemen were seen almost constantly near our line of march throughout the forenoon of the 18th of March, 1865. At last, when it was near noon, the occasional booming of cannon on the road ahead of the column was heard. Nearly every body in the army knew the meaning of that. It meant an effort on the part of the enemy to delay our march, by compelling us to halt, and perhaps form a line of battle, solely for the purpose of gaining time. If it had been an attack, the firing would have been more vigorous and rapid, and probably some musketry would have taken part in the firing. Finally, about noon, the First Division, Fourteenth Corps, arrived at a farm belonging to a Mr. Cox. The leading division for that day had arrived earlier, and had bivouacked temporarily for luncheon, probably to enable General Sherman, who was, up to that time, accompanying the left wing, to have a conversation with General Slocum and the corps commanders.

At all events, Sherman, Slocum, and Davis were there

at Mr. Cox's house, and they were in conversation in the yard in front of the house. When my division had been provided for, I went to the veranda of the house, and took a seat near Mr. Cox, who was then alone, but several children were passing to and fro between the veranda and the rooms opening onto it. And Mrs. Cox also was there. The entire family acted as if they were in the deepest distress from fright. The children were crying. Mr. and Mrs. Cox seemed to have been weeping, as their eyes were still red. I could not see any reason why this family should manifest such marked signs of trouble merely because Sherman's army was present. Mr. Cox spoke enigmatically, or at least vaguely. At first, I supposed he feared our troops, but I tried to reassure him on that point. It occurred to me that the family were hungry and feared starvation, and to allay fears of this sort I told him I would leave some subsistence stores for his family. He replied excitedly to this offer, in these words: "Oh, that won't save us." His manner throughout and his incoherent remarks showed that he expected some great calamity to befall him and his in a very short time. I became convinced that he wished me to understand that a battle was to be fought on or near his farm, and that this would necessarily endanger his family and all his property. I drew this inference, which, taken in connection with the conspicuous activity of the enemy's scouts, their attempting to check the head of our column with artillery, and the fact that the rebels had been at Cox's just before our arrival, was irresistible. I stated my convictions to General Jeff. C. Davis then and there. General Davis went

up to General Sherman, who was then conversing with Slocum, and standing near his horse, which had been brought to him by an orderly, and immediately said something to Sherman which I did not hear, but the purport of it could be clearly understood from Sherman's reply. It was in these words, which I heard very plainly: "Oh, no; they won't fight us this side of Smithfield or Raleigh." He was very emphatic in this declaration, as I heard it distinctly, and was deeply disappointed when I heard it; I was certain that General Sherman had made a mistake, and that it might prove disastrous to his army and our cause. Sherman then mounted his horse and rode off to join the Army of the Tennessee, which was marching on a road said to be six miles to the east of our road. Soon after his departure, we resumed our march, and went into camp about three miles from Cox's farm.

The two armies thus continued their march toward Goldsborough on roads nearly parallel, while, near the hamlet of Bentonville, General J. E. Johnston was preparing to fall on the left wing of Sherman's army with all the forces he could concentrate, including those recently from Savannah and Charleston under Hardee, those under Bragg, recently from Goldsborough, North Carolina, and a part of Hood's defeated army from the West, under Stewart and Cheatham.

The First Division of the Fourteenth Corps, Army of the Cumberland, under my command, was to take the advance on the 19th of March. The numerous indications on the 18th that there was to be a battle on the 19th, prompted me to prepare for the occasion, and especially

prompted me to wear the newest uniform of my rank, about which I had been careless for some time past. It seemed to me that, in the event of death or capture, I should desire my rank to be known by my uniform.

The morning of the 19th was a beautiful spring morning. A few soft clouds floated in the sky, and a gentle breeze was blowing. In the fence-corners alongside the road, the grassy turf gave an inviting bed to tired soldiers, and to those who had halted and laid down for other reasons than fatigue.

I was awakened on the 19th by musketry firing like irregular skirmishing, and, on inquiry, learned that our foragers had been checked only a short distance from camp by the enemy's pickets. It was the custom, under orders, too, for all foraging parties to leave camp an hour or more sooner than the troops, as they had to leave the main road and scour the adjacent country in search of provisions, which they would bring back to points where their respective commands were expected to camp for the night. Never before had the foragers been checked so near their camp. In fact, they had not advanced more than five hundred yards, before they ran into a strong picket from the enemy's army, and there they halted, some skirmishing with the enemy, others lying in the fence corners on the fresh green grass.

I continued at the head of my column, marching in the road till the foragers nearest the enemy were overtaken, when I was joined by General Slocum, who at once directed that half a brigade be formed in line and moved forward against the enemy, who were concealed in

a thick wood so completely that not one could be seen. I directed Colonel H. C. Hobart, Twenty-first Wisconsin, then in command of the First Brigade of my division, to take half his brigade and move it in line against the enemy till he found him. This order was very promptly and gallantly executed by Hobart and two of his regiments.

It was but a few minutes before Hobart struck a rebel force (reported to be a brigade of infantry), which retreated in great haste. At this point, the woods were more open on the left hand, and a dim road led off in a north-easterly direction, and passed about fifty yards to the right of a frame building that looked like a country school-house or church. Slocum directed me to send a brigade on this road, for the purpose of reconnoitering the ground in that direction and to the left of the main road. I directed Colonel George P. Buell to execute this order with his brigade. Buell continued to advance till he came in sight of the enemy. Unfortunately, he had under his orders diverged so far to the left of the main road that, when he formed a line with his brigade, there proved to be a wide gap to his right between him and Hobart, when the latter's brigade was brought up to the same line. It was only about a mile from our camp of the night before that Hobart's brigade, and the officers accompanying it, including General Slocum, General Davis, and myself, were fired on by a concealed battery on or near the road, just beyond a swamp about two hundred yards in width and of a depth then unknown. Beyond the swamp, as well as south of it, the ground was covered with a thick growth of black-jack oak and pine trees. In

front of Buell's left, and some distance beyond his left were open fields; but in front of the right of the regiments of his brigade, the thick growth of oak and pine concealed the enemy and his intrenchments from Buell and his men. Hobart's brigade was halted near the edge of the swamp, and a battery was brought up from the rear and placed in front of the rebel battery and to the right of Hobart's brigade. The Third Brigade, First Division, commanded by Colonel Miles, was placed in line to the right of the battery. It was General Slocum's object to develop the position of the enemy by making repeated assaults at different points along the front, and he gave me directions to this effect. Colonel Miles was directed to make the first advance across the swamp and through the woods beyond till he should find the enemy's lines. Miles's brigade dashed into the swamp with their usual vim and energy, waded across it, moved on into the woods till they saw the enemy's earthworks, which they assaulted. The loss of this brigade was very great on account of the character of the officers and men who fell, among whom was Captain Low, a fine soldier and promising man. The brigade was repulsed, as might have been expected, the enemy having substantial breastworks to protect them, and being able to see our men, while invisible themselves, except when they fired. I write this from memory, and can not here give a list of the gallant men and officers who fell in this assault.

Shortly after Miles's assault, Buell was directed to advance into the woods, and, if he could find the enemy, to assault him. There was no swamp in Buell's front, and he

executed the order promptly. He had not advanced one hundred yards before he found the enemy posted behind strong earthworks. He too made an assault, which was unsuccessful, and resulted in the loss of some valuable men and officers, including Colonel Eaton, of a Michigan regiment. In the meantime, Morgan's division of the Fourteenth Corps, Army of the Cumberland, had come up, and was placed on the right of mine, and General Morgan occupied some time in fortifying his position in front and rear, and I heard at the time, on both flanks, making a pretty substantial fortress around his division, which in the end proved of immense value to Sherman's army, and probably to Sherman's reputation.

A part of the Twentieth Corps had also come up over the heavy muddy roads, and Robinson's brigade of that corps had been placed in the gap, previously referred to, between Buell and Hobart. It might have been supposed that the results of the two assaults made by two brigades at points distant half a mile from each other would have satisfied every body on the ground that the enemy was in full force in our front, and that we were not held in check by a cavalry command. But a statement published many years after the event, shows that General Slocum was not yet prepared to send intelligence to Sherman that he was confronted by a large and well-commanded army. He was convinced, however, by the following circumstances. When Buell's brigade was repulsed from the enemy's works, three soldiers in rebel gray left their lines and passed over into Buell's ranks, carrying their arms with them. They were brought to me by the officer or men to

whom they had surrendered. The spokesman of the party insisted that he should see the general commanding our lines. He told me that he was from Syracuse, New York; that he and his two companions had been Union soldiers and had been captured, and, to avoid starvation, they had enlisted in the Confederate army, with the intention of deserting it and joining the Union army as soon as an opportunity should present itself. He informed me, also, that General J. E. Johnston, C. S. A., was in command of all the enemy's forces, and that Beauregard, Bragg, Hardee, and Cheatham were present. He stated that Johnston and Beauregard had ridden through the several divisions of their army, and made speeches, calculated to incite the troops to desperate efforts to overthrow the left wing of Sherman's army. These generals, he said, told their plans openly to their men, which were to destroy the left wing, and then turn on the right and destroy that. This information was of such importance that I immediately directed my only remaining staff officer, Major J. E. Edwards, acting adjutant-general, I believe it was, to take the man to General Davis or General Slocum, and in order that no time should be lost, gave the man my only horse to ride to either of them. All of my staff officers had been dispatched on various duties; all orderlies were away, on duty, and I was thus left alone. I was also afoot, as well as alone. To pass the time till some of my staff officers or escort should return, I walked along the right of Buell's line, and found that some breastworks had been thrown up. They were built of logs and fence rails found on the ground. I had gone to the extreme

right of Buell's line, and was standing by the last man of the regiment on the right. He was a very strong, tall man, who looked like a brave and true soldier. But he acted as if he were nervous. It may be, that his regiment had then received orders from Colonel Buell to fall back. But what the cause was I can not pretend to say positively. I noticed, however, that the rebel line had advanced very closely to ours at that point, and there halted; and I noticed particularly three soldiers among trees directly in front of the man and myself. Thinking it would steady his nerves, I took his gun from his hand and fired it at the group of men just mentioned, who were not over twenty yards from us. I then turned to my left, to return the gun to its rightful bearer. He was still there, and took his gun, but there was not another Union soldier of his brigade or any other command in sight. He went to the rear to join his regiment. Whether he ever reached it or not, I can not say.

I turned to my right, and saw the rebel flag flying at the breastworks that had been thrown up by Robinson's brigade, Twentieth Corps. This brigade had been surprised while still carrying rails to their breastworks, and had gone to the rear. The enemy had advanced all along their line. Buell was not driven back. He had, without order or authority, directed his brigade to fall back. Hobart was forced back, the troops on his left having left their works. Miles had been attacked on the left flank, and forced back into the woods, somewhere near Morgan's division. As stated before, there was not an officer, man, or horse at my disposal.

The enemy had the breastworks both on the right and left of my position, and were not thirty steps from me. My first thought was to surrender, as it seemed impossible that I could effect my escape, and almost certain death if it should be attempted. One thinks very rapidly while facing great danger, and I decided to make the attempt to rejoin my command, or at least to return to our lines, if I could find them. Stealing to the rear at a walk, over slightly descending ground, almost free from trees or bushes, or obstructions of any kind, I was not molested till I had passed about one hundred yards from the rebel lines. Then the ground ascended rapidly for thirty yards. This, with my conspicuous dress, brought me into full view of the enemy's line in my rear. It was then that a regular fusilade from at least a hundred guns was opened on me, cutting the twigs and bushes all around me, and throwing up black dirt around my feet; even the earth under my feet seemed to be cut away by the bullets. For the second time I was on the point of turning my face to the enemy, and saluting him as a captive, but a lull in the firing followed the brisk fusilade. I noticed some bushes about ten paces in advance of me, which seemed to invite me behind them for shelter, and I soon cut off the view of the enemy by getting behind them. In any event, I decided not to surrender till I should be stricken down by a bullet.

A few steps beyond these friendly bushes I was confronted by seven or eight young Federal soldiers. One was a bright, handsome youth of nineteen or twenty years, with black eyes, black hair, and fresh, rosy cheeks. He

asked me who I was. I told him I was Brigadier-General Carlin, commander of the First Division, Fourteenth Corps, Army of the Cumberland. He replied: "I am proud to see you here, General." He asked the question: "Can't we do something to stop those rebels that are coming up here?" The enemy's line was then advancing slowly and cautiously but a short distance from us. The young man told me that he and his companions had been picking off officers and color-bearers before I met them. It occurred to me that the Chinese system of noise might deter the rebels for a short time, and check their progress. In accordance with this idea, I commanded this squad of men to form into line, and proceeded to give commands in my loudest voice, as if maneuvering a battalion, but the system did not work well on the enemy. They continued to advance regardless of my commands and of the firing of my little squad. I then directed these young heroes to try to find their regiments in the rear and join them. I have always regretted not taking the name of the young man who spoke for the party on that occasion, as his entire conduct, zeal, courage, and brightness of mind would have made him a splendid officer in the regular army.

It was doubtless to the incident related above that General J. E. Johnston in his "Narrative" refers in the following quotation, and as the paragraph seems to describe the assaults made by Miles's and Buell's brigades, as well as the skirmishing of the seven or eight privates referred to above, I will quote more of it than I had at first intended.

“It [the ground selected by General Johnston for the battle.—W. P. C.] was the eastern edge of an old plantation, extending a mile and a half to the west, and lying principally on the north side of the road, surrounded east, south, and north by dense thickets of black-jack. As there was but one narrow road through the thicket, the deployment of the troops consumed weary time. Hoke’s division was formed with the center on the road, its line at right angles to it, on the eastern edge of the plantation, and its left extending some four hundred yards into the thicket to the south. His two batteries, his only artillery, were on his right, commanding the ground in front to the extent of the range of the guns. The troops belonging to the Army of the Tennessee were formed on the right of the artillery. The right strongly thrown forward, conforming to the edge of the open ground. In the meantime the *leading Federal troops* appeared and deployed [First Division, Fourteenth Corps, A. C.—W. P. C.], and, when so much of the Confederate disposition as has been described had been made, their right [Miles’s brigade.—W. P. C.] attacked Hoke’s division vigorously, especially its left, so vigorously, that General Bragg apprehended that Hoke, although slightly intrenched, would be driven from his position. He therefore applied urgently for strong reinforcements.

“Lieutenant-General Hardee, the head of whose column was then near, was directed, most injudiciously, to send his leading division, McLaws’s, to the assistance of the troops assailed; the other, Taliaferro’s, moving on to its place on the extreme right. McLaws’s division,

struggling through the thicket, reached the ground to which it was ordered just in time to see the repulse of the enemy by Hoke, after a sharp contest of half an hour, at short range. Soon after firing on the left ceased, a similar assault [by Buell's brigade.—W. P. C.] was made upon Stewart, whose troops, like those on their left, had already constructed breastworks. This attack was directed mainly against Stewart's own corps, commanded by Loring, and Clayton's division, by which it was received as firmly and repelled as promptly as that just described had been by Hoke's. Lieutenant-General Hardee was then directed to charge with the right wing, Stewart's troops and Taliaferro's division, as they faced obliquely to the left, each making the necessary change of front in advancing.

“As it could be seen that the Federal first line, except its right, which was hidden by woods, had thrown up intrenchments like our own, a body of troops was prepared to strike its flank, to lessen the danger of failure. [This was the explanation Colonel Buell gave when questioned by me about withdrawing his brigade from the line of battle before he was really attacked.—W. P. C.] It was a useless precaution, however, for the result of the charge was not for five minutes doubtful.” [General Johnston assumes too much in the above statement. Buell withdrew without awaiting to receive the charge, solely on account of the flanking force “prepared” by General Johnston; at least he gave no other reason for his action.—W. P. C.] “The Confederates passed over three hundred yards of the space between the two lines in quick

time, and in excellent order, and the remaining distance in double quick, without pausing to fire until their near approach had driven the enemy from the shelter of their intrenchments, in full retreat to their second line. . . .”

“Some distance in the rear, there was a very thick wood of young pines, into which the Federal troops were pursued, and in which they rallied, and renewed the fight.” This last quotation must have referred to the rally of the seven or eight men, and their desultory firing, to which I referred above. I have made the liberal quotation from “Johnston’s Narrative,” because it so singularly confirms what I had written from memory, before I had even read the narrative. I will now return to my personal experiences.

After dismissing the squad of seven or eight men, I turned to my left, in hopes of finding the main road on which I had advanced in the morning, and in walking about forty yards came to the edge of the brush bordering the road. But it was fully occupied by a Confederate line of troops, which was advancing as steadily and calmly as if regiments on review. In front of the line was an officer mounted on a horse. Near him a man mounted on a mule, probably an orderly or bugler. He carried an old-fashioned horse-pistol in his hand, which was levelled at me. He left the road and started directly for me. I was, perhaps, thirty steps from him. I backed into the bushes again and he discontinued his pursuit. Fortunately, he did not fire. By this time, I was fatigued almost to exhaustion. Continuing my walk parallel to the road, in the bushes, for about one hundred yards further, I discovered

two fully harnessed artillery horses tied to a tree. The picture of a brigadier-general, in uniform, riding a harnessed horse without a saddle, and entering our lines, came vividly to my mind and forced a smile which, however, no one else could see. I resolved to brave the laughter that would greet me, and crossed the road to the horses, intending to untie one of them and mount him. Untying the horse proved to be a very difficult operation. I tugged away at it for a minute or two, but made no progress.

While at this work I took a glance along the road toward the enemy, and, sure enough, there he was, again silently advancing up the road. Giving up the idea of riding, I walked along the road for about one hundred yards, and there was delighted to find a line of Union troops across the road. I saw the colonel of the regiment occupying that part of the line, and informed him that the enemy were not a hundred yards from him. In a very few minutes a volley was fired by this regiment and the enemy was repulsed. This second line of our troops was formed by the Twentieth Corps. I found Hobart's and Buell's brigade, my staff, and my horse, that I had missed and needed so much, some two hundred yards in the rear of the Twentieth Corps line. After this experience, I don't think I would again, under similar circumstances, have sent my only horse to carry a deserter from both armies to the commanding general, however important his information may have been. But this incident, according to General Slocum's published statement, furnished him good reasons for sending messengers in search of General

Sherman to inform him that the left wing had been attacked by the enemy in force. Miles's brigade, of the First Division, Fourteenth Corps, when overwhelmed by superior forces of the enemy in their charge, was forced off to the south-east of its position, into a swampy forest. Hobart's brigade had been overpowered too, and flanked out of position, and fell back till it had passed the main line formed by the Twentieth Corps. Buell, as before stated, had withdrawn his brigade on his own responsibility. The First Division, Fourteenth Corps, was the advance guard of the left wing. To it fell the duty of developing the position of the enemy's line lying beyond a dense wood, and it had to make detached assaults, which were gallantly made.

The narrative of General Johnston, commanding the enemy's army, and the long list of officers and men killed and wounded, attest their courage and fidelity to their cause. The official reports show that the heaviest loss of life was in the First Division, Fourteenth Corps, and on the 19th of March, 1865. They had no time or opportunity to throw up elaborate breastworks. They were drawn out into a thin line, with at least one gap of four hundred yards (later on filled by a brigade of the Twentieth Corps), in order to keep the enemy in check till the troops in rear could come up and form a line of battle. No other troops were placed on the left of the First Division when they arrived on the field; probably one brigade more would have prevented Johnson's flanking operation and Buell's withdrawal without waiting for the enemy's charge. It is not probable that the enemy would have passed the line

occupied by the First Division if another brigade had been on Buell's left, unless, indeed, the surprise of Robinson's brigade had opened a gap which could not have been filled. The battery that was captured by the enemy did not belong to my division, and was not placed under my command. General Sherman's official report published in the newspapers stated that I had lost a battery. I wrote him a letter requesting a correction of the report, but never received a reply.

There was one incident of the battle of Bentonville that has ever since been a mystery to me. After finding Buell's and Hobart's brigades, subsequent to their retirement from the front line, and having again a staff to assist me and a horse to ride, I started out in the woods to the front and right to hunt up Miles's brigade. The sun was getting low, and the shadows of the trees fell over the ground and all other objects, including men. I had ridden not over two hundred yards, when I came upon a regular skirmish line, the skirmishers being about ten steps apart and with arms at an "order." Not doubting that it was a Federal line, I rode through it, without paying particular attention to the color of their clothes; and in fact, the shadows of the trees would have made it difficult to distinguish a dark and dusty gray from a faded and dusty blue. The men took no notice of me. This, of course, would have prevented me from suspecting that they were Confederates, as they were not accustomed to allowing Union officers or men to pass unchallenged or unhurt through their lines. But after getting to their rear a short distance, the strangeness of their conduct in

letting me pass unnoticed caused me to suspect that they might not be Union soldiers; and then I scanned the color of their uniforms as closely as was possible in the darkened woods. It became a certainty that the color of their clothes was gray, and that they were rebel soldiers, and that I was a prisoner if they should choose to make me one. Knowing that, if I continued to the rear in that direction, I should ride into their main lines, I resolved to take the only chance of escape, and rode directly back through the line, passing so near to one slender little Confederate that I could have placed my hand on his head if I had been disposed to be familiar, which I was not. He did not even raise his eyes to look at me, though I rode a horse that never failed to attract the notice of all soldiers—a gray stallion, named Rosy, in honor of General Rosecrans. I could not avoid feeling kindly to those men for permitting me to pass out of their lines, when it was so easy for them to kill or capture me. A few steps from this skirmish line, I met General Jeff. C. Davis, and warned him that he was riding into a rebel skirmish line. He looked at the men who were nearest him, and in his emphatic way said: “No, —, they are not.” Then advancing a few steps, he said: “Yes, they are, —.” He then directed an aide-de-camp to bring Colonel Cogswell’s regiment of Massachusetts troops to that point, and to say to Colonel Cogswell that the enemy must be driven away. It was but a few minutes before Cogswell had a regiment there. A volley or two were fired by him. I again entered the same woods in search of Miles’s brigade. Instead of men standing in a straight line, I found them

dead on the ground, or reclining against trees, desperately wounded. One case was painful, horrible to behold—a poor Confederate sitting on the ground, but resting his body against a tree. He was trying to say something, but could not utter an intelligible sound. While in that wood, it seemed to me that one was as liable to be killed by his friends as by the enemy.

Johnston's narrative, as well as Sherman's official reports and utterances, show that the chief losses occurred on the 19th of March, and in the First Division, Fourteenth Corps, Army of the Cumberland. The Army of the Tennessee was recalled and arrived on the 20th, and the fighting on the Federal side was done principally by that army on the 20th and 21st of March. The First Division was placed in line of battle again on the 21st, but had no occasion to attack the enemy or defend itself, as the enemy was preparing to retreat.

On the 22d, we resumed the march to Goldsborough, North Carolina, where we arrived on the 23d, and where I was prostrated by sickness, the result of exposure and fatigue on the march, and especially in the battle of Bentonville.

September, 1889.

ON THE RIGHT AT ANTIETAM.*

BY RUFUS R. DAWES,

Brevet Brigadier-General United States Volunteers.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, September 16, 1862, General Hooker's army corps began to cross Antietam Creek. The Pennsylvania Reserves crossed on the bridge above Keedysville, while General Doubleday's division, to which I belonged, forded at a shallow place below. The troops advanced slowly toward the Sharpsburg and Hagerstown Turnpike. We passed over open fields and through orchards and gardens, and the men filled their pockets and almost empty haversacks with fruit. Shortly before dusk, sharp musketry and cannonading opened in our front. The men said the Reserves "had waked the animals up." It was nearly nine o'clock at night when our brigade reached the position adjacent to it. The men laid down upon the ground, formed in close column, muskets loaded and lines parallel to the turnpike. Once or twice during the night, heavy volleys of musketry crashed in the dark woods on either side. There was a drizzling rain, and with the certainty of deadly conflict on the morrow, the night was very dismal.

* At the battle of Antietam, the writer of this paper was a member of the Sixth Wisconsin Regiment. The regiment was in General Gibbon's brigade, General Abner Doubleday's division, General Hooker's army corps.

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